catharsis

By: Ahniki

SLAP

OH!
I THINK HE'S
COMING TO.
EARTH TO
LEOONNNNN.

OH JEEZE.
WE GOT A HAMLET
ON OUR HANDS.

LEON,
YOU'RE NOT DEAD
SO YOU CAN OPEN
YOUR EYES NOW.

HEY. WAKE UP. DO YOU NEED ANOTHER SLAP IN THE FACE?
OR WOULD YOU PREFER THAT PARIS GIVES YOU CPR AGAIN?

—
BLINK

PROCESSING - - -

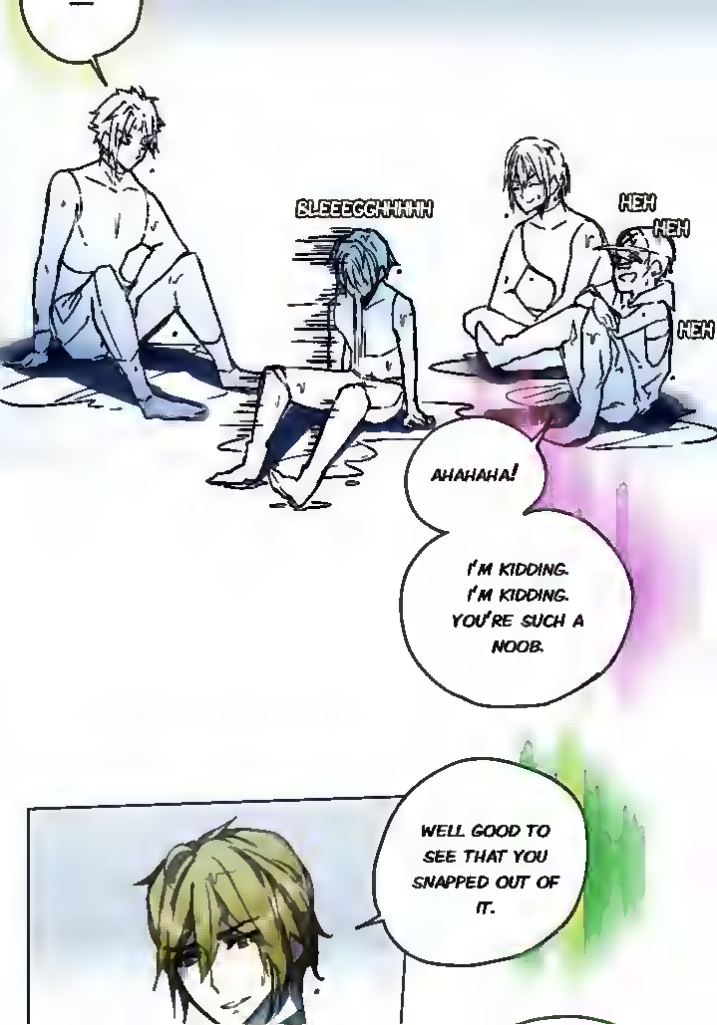
CPR?!
SHOCK
PFFBBT

α

MOUTH TO MOUTH WITH HIS ACTUAL FACE?

W-WITH THAT GUY?!

YES.


BLEEEGHHHHH
HEH
HEH
HEH
AHAHAHA!
I'M KIDDING. I'M KIDDING. YOU'RE SUCH A NOOB.
WELL GOOD TO SEE THAT YOU SNAPPED OUT OF IT.

WE CAN'T AFFORD TO SPEND MORE TIME SENDING YOU BACK INTO THE RECOVERY ROOMS AGAIN.

SORRY FOR NOT BEING HERE SOONER THOUGH. GOOD JOB ON MAKING IT THIS FAR.

BUT YOU STILL FAILED.

I'LL MAKE IT CLEAR THAT BEING UNDER OUR CARE MEANS THAT WE CAN'T ALLOW YOU TO STAY LIKE THIS.

1. FOCUS ON YOUR BREATHING.

2 NO MATTER WHAT, FOCUS ON YOUR BREATHING.

THOSE WERE THE WORDS OF ADVICE THAT HIRO HAD GIVEN YOU.

WHEN YOU'RE OUT ON THE FIELD, YOUR MIND WILL BE ALL OVER THE PLACE. YOUR BODY WILL SUBMIT TO THAT PACE

AND YOU'RE MORE LIKELY TO PANIC. YOU'LL LOSE IT.

IF YOU'RE NOT IN ONE PIECE, THAT'S WHEN THE FEAR STARTS TO TAKE OVER. YOU'RE NOT IN CONTROL AND THAT PUTS YOU IN EXTREME DANGER. YOU'RE EXACTLY WHERE THE TIMOREM WANT YOU TO BE.

SO THAT'S WHY WE NEED YOU TO FOCUS ON SOMETHING THAT MAY SEEM SO LITTLE BUT EASY FOR US TO CONTROL. IT CREATES A RHYTHM THAT YOU CAN EASILY FOLLOW. THE WHOLE PURPOSE OF THIS EXERCISE IS TO BE ABLE TO STAY IN YOUR OWN HEAD.

IT'S TO BUILD YOUR MENTAL ENDURANCE AND CREATE A METHOD TO KEEP YOUR COOL. YOU CAN'T ALLOW YOURSELF TO DROWN IN YOUR EMOTIONS.

DE JA VU?
AND I MEAN THAT IN A LITERAL SENSE AS WELL.
SO WE'LL DO THIS AGAIN AND THIS TIME YOU'LL FOLLOW OUR ADVICE.
...RIGHT NOW?

WELL OF COURSE! IT'S IMPARATIVE THAT YOU LEARN TO STOP FAINTING INSIDE THE VEIL. YOU NEED TO BUILD UP SOME RESISTANCE AGAINST THE STRAIN YOU'RE NOT USED TO.
PLU-
YOU CAN SAY THAT IT'S MAYBE JUST A LITTLE UNCOOL TOO...
AH...
...YEAH
I GUESS IT IS A LITTLE---

...PATHETIC.

BUT I CAN'T BLAME YOU TOO MUCH BECAUSE IT MIGHT SEEM A LITTLE TOO MUCH FOR SOMEONE OF YOUR CALIBER.

BUT YOU'VE GOT OUR FINEST TO HELP WITH YOUR TRAINING, SO I'VE GOT A GOOD FEELING ABOUT THE END RESULTS.

SO LET'S DO OUR

BEST TO WORK HARD AND IMPROVE, OK?

...YEAH

GREAT!

YOU'VE MADE IT THIS FAR AND I INTEND THAT YOU MAKE IT OUT TO THE END.
FOR BOTH YOUR SAKE FOR SURVIVING IN THE FUTURE, AND MINE FOR WORRYING LESS ABOUT YOU BEING HELPLESS.
I DON'T NORMALLY RECRUIT FOR MYSELF BUT I'VE MADE YOU AN EXCEPTION SINCE I CAN SEE A LOT OF POTENTIAL IN YOU IT'S A DECISION THAT I DON'T REGRET.
OUR TRAINING TOGETHER WILL YIELD FRUITFUL RESULTS. I'LL MAKE SURE OF IT

THAT WAY WE AREN'T WORN DOWN BY ANYMORE SHARP GLARING.
GLAAAAAAREEEEEEE!
HE'S PROBABLY MAD THAT HE GOT HIS CLOTHES WET. CAN'T SAY I DIDN'T WARN HIM THOUGH.
ALSO, IT MIGHT GET A L
MORE INTENSE FURTHER
DOWN THE ROAD, BUT TIME

IS OF THE ESSENCE AND WE CAN'T AFFORD TO TAKE UP TIME BY CONSTANTLY SEND YOU BACK TO THE RECOVERY ROOMS AFTER A FAINTING SPELL.

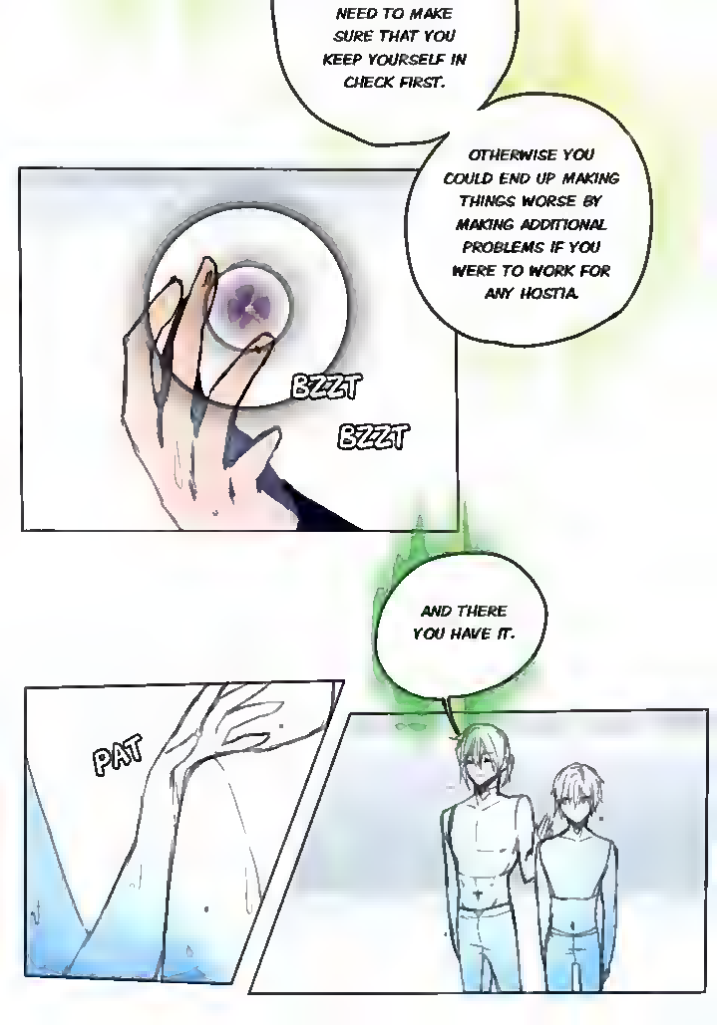
I'VE ONLY GOT TWO MONTHS TO TEACH YOU, AND I NEED YOU TO BE ON YOUR TOES.

IT'S AS SHORT AS WE CAN GO SINCE YOU NEED TO GET BACK TO SCHOOL AFTERALL
JUST THINK ABOUT YOUR FUTURE!
BUT 2 MONTHS IS SUFFICIENT ENOUGH SINCE YOU'RE LEARNING FROM THESE TWO.
HIRO, WHO IS HIGHLY REGUARDED FOR HIS MENTAL COLLECTIVENESS AND STEELED EMOTION.

OF COURSE I'LL BE HERE WITH YOU WHEN I CAN, BUT I'M RELYING ON THESE TWO TO TAKE MY PLACE WHEN I CAN'T.

BUT ANYWAY, LET'S HURRY UP AND GET STARTED.

THEN LET'S CONTINUE OUR EXERCISE.
MAKE SURE YOU DO THIS PROPERLY THIS TIME LEON.
THESE ARE ONLY THE FUNDAMENTALS THAT WE'RE DRILLING INTO YOU.
BEFORE WE CAN SEND YOU INTO ANY OTHER VEILS, YOU


NEED TO MAKE SURE THAT YOU KEEP YOURSELF IN CHECK FIRST.
OTHERWISE YOU COULD END UP MAKING THINGS WORSE BY MAKING ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS IF YOU WERE TO WORK FOR ANY HOSTIA.
BZZZT
BZZZT
AND THERE YOU HAVE IT.
PAT

UM...
ACTUALLY...
I CAN'T SWIM

HM?
WELL I DO SEE HOW THAT WOULD BE A PROBLEM...

I'M SURE YOU'LL FIND TIME TO LEARN HOW TO DO IT PROPERLY IN THE FUTURE.

BUT FOR THIS PRACTICE, IT'S NOT ABOUT KNOWING HOW TO SWIM OUT OF IT JUST YET.

IT'S ABOUT LEARNING TO NOT DROWN, AND THAT SHOULDN'T HAPPEN AS OFTEN AS LONG AS YOU ACTUALLY DO WHAT WE TELL YOU TO.

SO WATER SEEMS TO REALLY BOTHER YOU. WE CAN START FROM THERE.

AT LEAST NOW WE WON'T HAVE TO WASTE TIME WATCHING THOSE MOVIES. AREN'T YOU GLAD?
NO... I WOULD MUCH RATHER JUST WATCH THOSE THAN DO THIS.
...
...AW... BUT WATCHING MOVIES BEATS WORKING ANYDAY.
ANYWAYS, I'LL BE WITH YOU IN THE BEGINNING TO COACH

YOU THROUGH IT.

KIND OF LIKE HOW VIRGIL HELPED DANTE. BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO ENDURE THE PHYSICAL HARDSHIPS WITH YOUR OWN STRENGTH.

WE GO SPARTAN WHEN WE REACH THE APEX OF YOUR TRAINING. SO DON'T COUNT ON ME SAVING YOU AS MUCH.

AND THEN IN THE END, FAINTING WILL NO LONGER BE AN ISSUE! WHO KNOWS WHERE YOUR SKILL LEVEL WILL RISE UP TO BY THE TIME WE'RE DONE.

SO PREPARE
YOURSELF LEON.

I STILL ENDED UP DROWNING A BIT IN THE BEGINNING. IT TOOK SOME TIME FOR ME TO TRUST IN MY OWN STRENGTH, BUT I MANAGED THROUGH CONTROLLING MY BREATHING AND LEARNING TO CALM MYSELF.

ALTHOUGH THAT GOAL WAS BARELY ACCOMPLISHED, A NEW GOAL WAS SET UP FOR ME RIGHT AWAY. I WAS SUBJECTED TO RIGOROUS MENTAL AND PHYSICAL TRAINING.

EVERY VEIL WAS DIFFERENT. AND IT WAS SOMETHING I COULDN'T GET USED TO. IT WAS LIKE LIVING OUT A HORROR STORY.

WHEN I WASN'T RESTING IN THE REMH ROOM, I WAS GUARANTEED A NIGHTMARE.

BUT ON THE PLUS SIDE, I DID MANAGE TO STOP FAINTING. (HOORAY!) I EVENTUALLY GREW NUMB TO THE HORRORS THAT HIRO CAN COOK UP IN HIS VEILS.

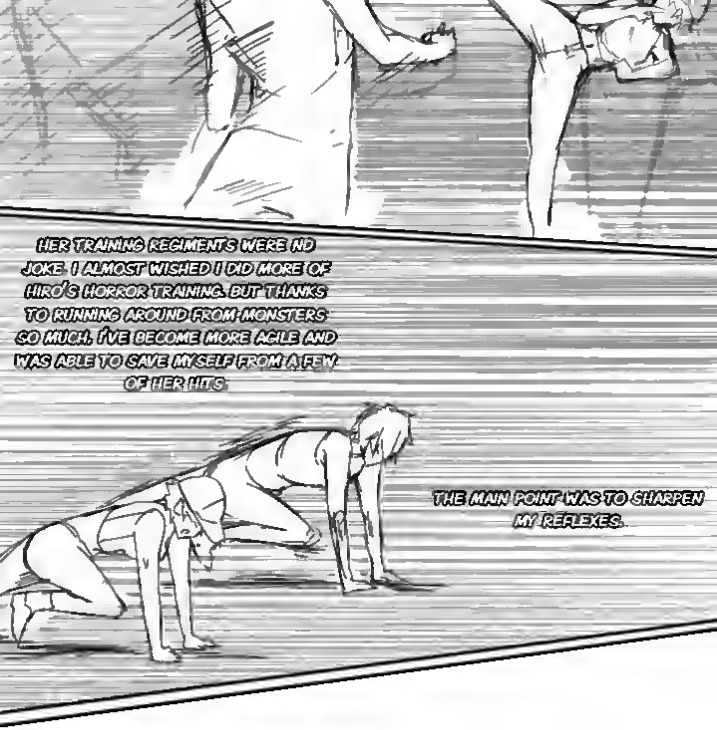
...HE'S A LOT MORE TWISTED THAN WHAT HE LOOKS ON THE OUTSIDE.

THE COLORLESS VOICE IN THE BACK OF MY HEAD CONTINUED TO BRING ME DOWN A LOT IN THE BEGINNING. BUT IT EVENTUALLY STOPPED AS I GOT BETTER IN TRAINING.

I FIRST THOUGHT THAT IT'S INTENTIONS WERE TO HELP ME AS IT DID BEFORE. BUT INSTEAD IT GOT WORSE AND SOUNDED ALMOST IMPATIENT. MY SANITY WAS AT ITS LIMIT UNTIL I DECIDED TO STOP LISTENING TO IT.

[illegible] IS CRAZY STRONG.

SHE SENT ME DIRECTLY BACK TO THE RECOVERY ROOM AS SOON AS TRAINING STARTED. IT COULDN'T BE HELPED SINCE SHE DID A NUMBER ON ME. BUT THAT'S WHAT I GET FOR UNDERESTIMATING HER TINY FIGURE.


HER TRAINING REGIMENTS WERE NO JOKE. I ALMOST WISHED I DID MORE OF HIRO'S HORROR TRAINING. BUT THANKS TO RUNNING AROUND FROM MONSTERS SO MUCH, I'VE BECOME MORE AGILE AND WAS ABLE TO SAVE MYSELF FROM A FEW OF HER HITS.
THE MAIN POINT WAS TO SHARPEN MY REFLEXES.

AFTER [illegible] WITHIN THE VEILS, I WAS [illegible] TO STUDY IN ORDER TO [illegible] UP WITH SCHOOL. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I [illegible] FELT SO [illegible] TO BE [illegible]

THERE [illegible] MANY TIMES [illegible] I THOUGHT MY [illegible] AND MY BODY [illegible] BREAK. I WAS SO [illegible] OF IT. HAD IT NOT [illegible] FOR HARVEY TALKING ME THROUGH IT ALL. HE WAS [illegible] FATHERLY.

HE [illegible] THAT HE KEPT ME [illegible] FOR THE MINIMUM OF 6 MONTHS. BUT WHAT I HAD TO ENDURE ROUNDED OFF TO 6 [illegible] OF [illegible] FROM THE TIME [illegible] IN THE VEILS.

TIME WAS AGONIZINGLY SLOW.
BUT I WAS KEPT BUSY TO KEEP ME
FROM THINKING OF IT.

THE TWO [illegible] WERE UP AND I WAS
GOING TO BE SENT BACK.

SO YOU READY TO GO YET?

YEAH.

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